GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1888
ANSWERED ON:26.07.2002
CONSUMER SAFETY
S. SAIDUZZAMAN

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the present thermometers, clinical and otherwise using mercury are a threat to human health and safety when they breakdown;

(b) if so, whether the Government are aware that many countries have switched over or are in the process of doing this to have thermometers without mercury and other safe material;

(c) if so, the details of such countries;

(d) whether the Government have formulated or propose to formulate any plan with regard to consumer safety;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the Government have ever been approached by Bureau of Indian Standards and other bodies charged with this responsibility on the need for such a development; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD)

(a) : The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has formulated Indian Standards IS 3055(Part 1):1994 Clinical Thermometers: Solid Stem Type and IS 3055(Part 2):2002 Clinical Thermometers Scale Type. Both these thermometers are mercury filled in glass. The specifications have been formulated by a national committee comprising consumers, manufacturers, scientists, technocrats and eminent persons dealing with the subject. While formulating a standard the committee takes care of all the aspects including risk factors, if any.

(b) & (c): Alternative design of Clinical Electrical Thermometers that do not contain mercury has been developed. It is not known as to what extent the non-mercury thermometers have replaced mercury thermometers in various countries.

(d) to (g): In order to protect consumer interests, the Government of India has recently brought clinical thermometers covered by IS 3055(Part 1):1994 and IS 3055(Part 2):2002 under Compulsory BIS Certification under the BIS Act, 1986 through Gazette Notification No. GSR 843(E) published on 9 November 2001. The Notification will come into effect in September, 2002.